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Our Ref: EYB135

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Early Years Bulletin

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you have been having a good week.

Booking is now live for the mass testing sites in Pershore, Bromsgrove, Redditch and Worcester with further sites in Wyre Forest and Malvern Hills due to go live within the next two weeks. Details of how Early Years staff can book a test are included in the bulletin alongside further guidance covering key items of Covid prevention measures.

Please also find local guidance updates (non covid), training and opportunities and support for children and families.

Best wishes to you for the weekend

### Contents

Government updates .....	2
Guidance on Cleaning and COVID .....	3
Asymptomatic testing in education – FAQs.....	3
How to stop spread of COVID-19 .....	3
Testing children with wider COVID-19 symptoms .....	4
Community testing for essential workers.....	4
Eight ways to support your anxious child during the coronavirus pandemic .....	5
Weekly attendance data .....	5
GET SAFE training now available to book .....	6
NEF Briefing session for childminders .....	6
Early Years Professional Development Programme (EY PDP) .....	7

## Government updates

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) asymptomatic testing for staff in primary schools and nurseries \(opens in new window\)](#), updated 29 January and added updated information about reporting delivery and test issues using the form, and contacting the helpline for the link which has been shared with primary schools, school-based nurseries, and maintained nursery schools, to access guidance and support materials.

[Check early years qualifications \(opens in new window\)](#), on 28 January 2021 updated the 'Overseas qualifications' and 'Qualifications started before 1 September 2014' sections with clarification about qualifications information.

[EYFS staff:child ratios – DfE approved qualifications \(opens in new window\)](#) Updated on 28 January 2021, guidance about titles of early years qualifications in 'Early years qualifications: pre-September 2014' and a new listing of a DfE approved qualification from Peterborough University in 'Early years qualifications: from 1 September 2014'.

[Ofsted: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) rolling update \(opens in new window\)](#) updated on 02 February 2021 to clarify that we will carry out planned inspection work remotely until March 8 at the earliest.

[Ofsted inspections to be done remotely \(opens in new window\)](#) on 02 February 2021 updated dates to clarify that we will carry out planned inspection work until 8 March at the earliest.

[Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak \(opens in new window\)](#) updated on 02 February 2021 added 'Attendance in education and early years settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak: 23 March 2020 to 28 January 2021'.

[Protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings for children during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak \(opens in new window\)](#) updated on 02 February 2021 the home education section with further information on vulnerable children who have difficulty engaging in remote education. Also added a section on Test and Trace Support Payments.

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak \(opens in new window\)](#) updated on 02 February 2021 the section on choosing after-school clubs and out-of-school activities to make it clear that parents should try to limit the number of settings their children attend as far as possible.

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges \(opens in new window\)](#) on 03 February 2021 updated sections on attending nursery, school and college, remote education, exams, asymptomatic testing and lateral flow tests, Ofsted inspections, entry tests for selective schools, food, and EHC plans.

## Guidance on Cleaning and COVID

We received a number of questions about cleaning regime following the new variants.

Public Health England (PHE) have issued guidance on regular cleaning, where a confirmed case has been and waste management.

[Read COVID-19 guidance on cleaning in non-healthcare settings outside the home](#)

For 'deep cleaning' following a confirmed case, cleaning should be undertaken in accordance with the following section in the PHE *guidance: ['Principles of cleaning after an individual with symptoms of, or confirmed COVID-19, the case has left the setting or area'](#)*

Cleaning related to COVID does not require any new skills or technology. Current cleaning staff should be able to undertake this wearing appropriate PPE as set out in the guidance above. Usual cleaning items such as mops, buckets and cloths are all that is needed but they will need to be disposed more often.

The new methods which are being marketed such as fogging or UV light machines have not been proven to be any more effective for controlling transmission of infection than cleaning as set out in the PHE guidance above.

If you have any queries then contact your cleaning provider or email us at:

[CV19EducationSchools@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:CV19EducationSchools@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

## Asymptomatic testing in education – FAQs

The Department for Education (DfE) has updated its frequently asked questions on asymptomatic testing in education settings.

- [Asymptomatic Testing in Primary Schools, School-Based Nurseries and Local Authority Maintained Nurseries FAQ](#)

## How to stop spread of COVID-19

Public Health England published new general guidance on 2 February about how to stop the spread of COVID-19. Can you please share this guidance with parents through your own various communications.

[Guidance on how to stop the spread of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

## Testing children with wider COVID-19 symptoms

In addition to the three main COVID-19 symptoms there are additional symptoms that can present instead of or in addition to the main symptoms. Children are more likely to display these symptoms.

The recommendation in the letter issued last week to test pupils and staff with wider COVID-19 symptoms has now been retracted and amended.

In order to detect cases earlier and reduce transmission, **testing of children** (not staff) with the wider symptoms of COVID-19 and who are in school or an early years setting will be piloted in invited schools/early years settings and recommended to parents.

Schools/early years setting will be contacted with details of the pilot and **invited to take part**. A review of the impact of this pilot on detecting cases, reducing transmission and testing capacity will indicate if this can continue to be offered to the pilot schools/early years settings when schools fully open and or extended to all schools/early years settings.

## Community testing for essential workers

Booking is now live for the mass testing sites in Pershore, Bromsgrove, Redditch and Worcester with further sites in Wyre Forest and Malvern Hills due to go live within the next two weeks.

To book a test please use this link: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/LateralFlowTesting>

Rapid turnaround tests are supplied by NHS Test and Trace and will help identify people who are positive for Covid-19 but have no symptoms.

Early Years staff can also book test appointments at the University of Worcester Lateral Flow Test Riverside Building, Worcester using the link below:

<https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/COVIDTestBookingPublic/StaffTesting.aspx>

When booking, you will be asked to select your sector/organisation from a drop-down list and may be asked to verify your employer by showing your ID badge when you attend your appointment. Testing capacity is limited, and we have prioritised essential staff. As this is a targeted testing resource, we would ask that this information and the booking links are not shared with other staff groups. We would encourage employees eligible for this prioritised LFT testing to book test slots at sites which are either close to home, their area of work or on their commute route. This is to limit unnecessary travel during the current national lockdown.

## Eight ways to support your anxious child during the coronavirus pandemic

**An article written by Vicki Curry, who is director of training programmes for child mental health professionals at the Anna Freud Centre.**

Coronavirus has caused everyone's lives to change and the future feels very uncertain. Both change and uncertainty can be big causes of anxiety. So, it's not surprising that worry is a feature of our lives at present. Here are eight simple steps, based on research into childhood anxiety, to help you to support your child - whatever their age - at this difficult time.

We hope that [this article \(opens in new window\)](#) can support children within your setting or can be passed onto parents/carers who may find it helpful during these difficult times.

Sharing a story can really help children open up and talk about the worries they may have. Through books adults are able to help children talk about and recognise their feelings and worries, bringing them out in the open so that we can support children in understanding that worries are "normal" and find ways to help children work through them.

[Booktrust have put together a useful list of books to support healthy minds \(opens in new window\)](#)

Other books that raise the topic of worries include: -

- *The Worrysaurus*- by Rachel Bright
- *Everybody Worries*- by Jon Burgerman
- *The Huge Bag of Worries*- by Virginia Ironside
- *The Worry Box* – by Suzanne Chiew
- *The Very Hungry Worry Monsters*- by Lara Ede
- *The Invisible String* - by Patrice Karst

## Weekly attendance data

Thank you for your ongoing weekly returns, we really appreciate you taking the time to complete the information.

[The form to complete for the week commencing Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February is now available \(opens in new window\)](#)

Please be aware that you need to use the new link every week – you will **not be able to access the Form** via last week's link.

The form should be submitted by **9am on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> February**. Please note that schools with nursery provision should also be submitting a return, for the nursery children only.

## GET SAFE training now available to book

As mentioned in last week's bulletin we have organised for West Mercia Police to deliver eight Get safe sessions specifically to the PVI Early Years and Childcare Sector.

The sessions are free to attend, will be delivered virtually and are for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy DSL's.

- Tuesday 20 April, 7pm to 8.30pm, course code: EY/21/046
- Thursday 22 April, 7pm to 8.30pm, course code: EY/21/047
- Tuesday 04 May, 1 pm to 2.30pm, course code: EY/21/048
- Friday 07 May, 9.30am to 11am, course code: EY/21/049
- Monday 10 May, 7pm to 8.30pm, course code: EY/21/050
- Wednesday 12 May, 7pm to 8.30pm, course code: EY/21/051
- Tuesday 18 May, 1pm to 2.30pm, course code: EY/21/053
- Friday 21 May, 9.30am to 11am, course code: EY/21/054

Please book your places via [CPD \(opens in new window\)](#) and joining instructions will be attached to your confirmation from CPD.

If you encounter any issues when booking please contact the training team on 01905 844 420 or email [workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:workforcesupport@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)

## NEF Briefing session for childminders

If you are a childminder who is interested in offering Nursery Education Funding, we are holding a briefing on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February from 7.30pm to 9pm. The virtual session is free to attend and includes information about:

- Statutory requirements
- Eligibility
- Claims Process
- Worcestershire arrangements

If you are a childminder who already offers funded places but want to refresh your knowledge, you are also able to book onto the session.

If you are interested in attending, please book a place via [CPD \(opens in new window\)](#) using event code EY/21/056. Joining instructions will be attached to your confirmation from CPD.

## Early Years Professional Development Programme (EY PDP)

The Department for Education (DfE) is pursuing plans identified in the document, 'Unlocking talent, Fulfilling Potential' around social mobility through education and we are delighted to be part of one of the national programmes. The Early Years Professional Development Programme (EY PDP) is delivering continued professional development for EY practitioners who are working with the most disadvantaged children.

The aim of this training is to improve the skills of the early years workforce to support children's development of language and literacy, and so impact on the number of children starting school with a below expected level of communication, as recorded in the EYFS profile.

The DfE is funding practitioners from 45 settings across the County to attend training offered by their partners, Education Development Trust, and Elklan. This funding is designed to help address some of the barriers, such as cost and backfilling staff, that can make it difficult for Early Years Practitioners to access effective CPD. We are grateful to settings for supporting their staff to undertake this training. There is also the opportunity for the setting to be accredited as a Communication Friendly setting, and staff to participate in practise sharing forums.

The training sessions will re-start on-line from 24<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and we hope you will see a wide benefit from this high quality, training in terms of staff skills in improving children's language acquisition.

At present access is restricted to identified settings only. It is hoped that we will be able to open this to more practitioners in the future, extending the reach of the training and further benefit from the high-quality resources developed for the programme.

Further details are available on the [Early Years PDP website \(opens in new window\)](#) or from the Early Years team.

Best regards,

Ian Morris  
Early Years and Childcare Strategic Manager

